

COUNCIL POLICY FORM

SUBJECT: City Council Guidelines and Standards Relating to Staff Assistance, Travel and Other Resources

POLICY PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines and standards regarding secretarial assistance, staff assistance, meeting and conference attendance and expenses. This policy is supplementary to and in no way is intended to conflict with the City Charter.

POLICY STATEMENT:

- I. **Secretarial Assistance.** In order to effectively discharge the responsibilities of elected officials, the Mayor and Councilmembers are entitled to receive the following clerical/secretarial services.

- A. Preparation of correspondence relating to official City business within the resource restraints of the adopted budget. Each member of the Council is to be given equal consideration. Correspondence shall be presented in handwritten form or dictated on tape except for routine acknowledgements. Correspondence to political organizations, in support of a Councilmember's pursuit of a political office, or in support of someone else's pursuit of a political office is not to be prepared using City secretarial resources.

It is the Council's determination that it is in the Mayor's assigned responsibilities to correspond with persons or organizations on behalf of the City. To this end, the correspondence work of the Mayor is to be given priority.

- B. Assistance shall be provided to Councilmembers in arranging for meetings to be held in City facilities, except for meetings related to political campaigns. Normal scheduling methods shall be used.
- C. Assistance in securing single copies of official records will be provided.
- D. A monthly calendar shall be prepared and maintained for all Councilmembers. Councilmembers shall be notified of upcoming events to determine their respective interest, with appropriate arrangements made for such meetings.
- E. Unless otherwise requested by Councilmember, Council mail is to be opened daily, reviewed by the City Manager, and if of a non-urgent nature, distributed with the agenda on Friday and before Council

meetings on Tuesday evening. Councilmembers may pick up mail at City Hall any time during office hours. The Mayor's mail shall be opened daily, reviewed by the City Manager, and distributed daily to the Mayor's office.

- F. Councilmembers are to pick up or deliver all material except for the normal delivery coincident with agenda packet distribution, and except in emergencies.
- G. All materials prepared using secretarial/clerical resources are to be placed in the Council Reading File, and are open to public inspection during normal office hours.
- H. The City Manager shall assign a person or persons to provide the above noted secretarial/clerical services and shall so advise the City Council.

II. **Material, Supplies and Telephone.** Certain supplies and materials are required by Councilmembers to discharge their functions. The City Manager shall make available to Councilmembers the following materials and supplies when requested.

- A. A key to City Hall to be returned when a Councilmember leaves office.
- B. One file cabinet per four year term, to be returned when a Councilmember leaves office.
- C. Office supplies and business cards for official City use.
- D. Long distance call expenses up to \$100 per year may be reimbursed for each Council for official City business.
- E. Provision of one laptop computer available for Councilmembers to check-out on an as-needed basis for City business-related use.
- F. Access to emergency information via pager device/service.

III. **Council Travel and Expense.** The Charter provides for payment of actual and necessary expenses incurred by Councilmembers when on official duty on order of the City Council. In furtherance of this Charter provision, the following guidelines are established.

- A. Councilmembers' attendance at conferences and meetings.¹
Attendance at conferences and meetings can be both beneficial and cost effective to the City. For those Councilmembers who choose to participate, attendance would be viewed as an extension of official City responsibilities. Councilmembers may choose to attend conference for one or more of the following reasons:
1. Voting Delegate: The City is usually requested to designate an official delegate from among the Council who will cast the City's vote and represent the City's position on business presented before the conference delegation.
 2. Committee Membership: Councilmembers may choose to serve on local, state and national committees which provide the opportunity to represent state or City interest in key policy and legislative areas. Meetings are often held in conjunction with annual conferences as a means of saving cost and encouraging wider attendance.
 3. Education: Most conferences are workshops and seminars which are used to brief Councilmembers on key legislation, policies or programs impacting local government.
 4. Advocacy: A conference environment offers Councilmembers the opportunity to articulate the City's position on key legislation and funding policies with key elected/appointed officials on both the state and federal levels.
 5. Sharing of City's Expertise: Sunnyvale is widely viewed throughout the nation as a model in local government management. Sunnyvale Councilmembers may on occasion be invited to present papers or presentations to a conference or workshop with the goal of improving the efficiency and performance of local government in general.
- B. Affiliations. Each year the Council will assess the benefit of City membership in the following organizations which have traditionally been identified as providing support and service to local governments:
- . The National League of Cities (NLC)
 - . U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM)
 - . League of California Cities (LCC)

¹To facilitate discussion, the words "conference" and "meeting" are used interchangeably throughout this document.

- . Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
- . Intergovernmental Council (IGC)²
- . Santa Clara County Cities Association (SCCCA)

C. Conferences. The following conferences and meetings are approved for inclusion by Councilmembers in the annual Council Travel Budget Proposal cited in Section D:

- . Annual Meeting (NLC)
- . Congressional Cities Conference (NLC)
- . Annual Conference (USCM)
- . Mid-Winter Meeting (USCM)
- . Annual Conference (LCC)
- . Annual Executive Forum (LCC)
- . New Councilmembers Conference (LCC)³
- . Bi-Annual Legislative Conference (LCC)
- . General Assemblies (ABAG)
- . General membership meetings of the Santa Clara County Cities Association

Attendance at one-day workshops not requiring air travel and which meet any of the purposes cited in Section III may be included in the Travel Budget Proposal.

Councilmembers traveling at City expense to conferences and committee meetings of National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the League of California Cities shall submit a written activity report to the entire Council. The written activity report shall be submitted at the same time the expense statement is submitted.

D. Budget. The cost of the proposed travel must not exceed the fiscal year 1984/85 adopted budget (\$30,628) adjusted for inflation in accordance with normal budget practices. Subsequent years' allocations will be based solely on this base year even if there are budget modifications during a given fiscal year.

Five percent of the annual appropriation shall be set aside as a contingency for use by the individual serving as Mayor. The

²Although the Intergovernmental Council is required by County Charter, the organization is not active and its functions are carried out by the Santa Clara County Cities Association.

³Newly-elected Councilmembers may attend only.

remaining ninety-five percent shall be distributed equally to each Council seat. Outgoing Councilmembers are allocated one-third of the budget for their seats; incoming Councilmembers are allocated two-thirds, plus any unspent funds allocated to the outgoing Councilmembers' respective seats.

Since the Mayor's term does not coincide with the fiscal year, the Mayor's 5% must be prorated as well. One-third of the budget will be allocated to the outgoing Mayor; two-thirds will be allocated to the newly appointed Mayor, plus any unspent funds allocated to the outgoing Mayor.

It is not always possible to anticipate all the future plans of every organization or group. As such, the adopted travel budget can be amended during the fiscal year by approval of the City Council at a public meeting.

- E. Approval and Monitoring. Specific Council authorization is not required for Councilmembers to attend conferences and meetings which fall under Section III of this policy, subject to the Councilmember's budget limitations. In addition, Councilmembers may attend conferences and meetings that meet one or more of the following purposes, subject to individual budget limitations and prior Council approval to attend:

- . Committee/board meetings of NLC and LCC⁴
- . Conferences that are of obvious benefit to the City
- . Councilmember has been invited to present a City/State position
- . Councilmember is lobbying on behalf of a City/State program
- . Conferences that provide professional development for Councilmembers in carrying out official City responsibilities

Staff will work with each Councilmember to prepare an individual annual budget, based upon the Councilmember's travel plans relating to appointments to organizations and individual interests. This will be amended as necessary. The purpose of this budget is to provide a monitoring tool for each Councilmember's travel budget. This budget does not need Council approval, as it is subject to the overall guidelines of this policy. In the event that a Councilmember's travel

⁴Once a Councilmember has obtained Council approval to travel to meetings of a specific NLC or LCC Committee, the Councilmember has authority to fulfill these travel commitments through his/her committee tenure, subject to individual budget limitations. The Councilmember is not required to obtain Council approval annually under this circumstance.

budget, as amended, will result in the individual allocation being exceeded, the budget must go to Council for approval. As Councilmembers request authorization to attend any conference requiring Council approval above, the effect of that travel on the individual Councilmember's budget will be provided to Council at that time.

Each Councilmember will be provided with an update of his/her travel expenses compared to budget as expenses are paid. In addition, the Mayor (who authorizes payment of expenses) will receive current information on each Councilmember's expenditures in a timely manner.

F. Expense Reimbursed. Expenses will be paid by the City for conferences, conventions, meetings, workshops, seminars, activities and the like on the following basis:

1. Registration fees, if any, shall be paid directly by the City in advance.
2. Transportation.
 - a. Conferences or meetings outside of the San Francisco Bay Area:
 - (1) Air travel expense shall be paid by the City in advance on the basis of the most direct route to the site, at coach rates, provided such accommodations are reasonably available.
 - (2) Transportation to and from the airport shall be by the most practical and efficient means available.
 - (3) Rental vehicles may be used for business purposes at the destination subject to the following:
 - (a) no other reasonable transportation is available
 - (b) taxi fare would exceed the cost of the rental vehicle
 - (4) The expense of driving a personal automobile shall be paid by the City on the following basis:

- (a) if air transportation is reasonably available, payment shall be limited to the cost of coach air fare
 - (b) if such air transportation is not reasonably available, payment shall be made on the basis of the established City rate per mile
 - b. Local conferences, meetings or activities:
 - (1) Councilmembers shall be reimbursed for use of their personal vehicles at the established City rate per mile while on official City business, which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - (a) authorized attendance at any conference, meeting, convention, workshop or seminar
 - (b) attendance at meetings such as the Transportation Commission, South Bay Dischargers Authority
 - (c) travel within the City regarding official City business
- 3. Lodging.
 - a. The City will pay in advance the amount necessary to reserve a hotel room. The Councilmember may either pay the remainder of the hotel bill in its entirety or the City will pay such bill upon receipt from the hotel. In the latter case, if nonreimbursable items appear on the bill, the Councilmember shall pay for the same promptly upon return to the City.
 - b. Hotel accommodations will be at the hotel serving as the site of the conference, where reasonably possible.
- 4. Meals. Reasonable expenses incurred for meals by any Councilmember while on official duty shall be paid by the City, including but not limited to the following instances:
 - a. Meals while attending any conference, meeting, workshop, seminar or convention; or

- b. Meals occurring during a local conference, meeting, workshop, seminar or convention; or
- c. Meals hosted by Councilmembers for the purpose of discussing City business; or
- d. Where a meal is part of an activity which the Councilmember is attending in his or her official capacity.

G. Reporting of Expenses.

- 1. Statements of expense shall be submitted to the Director of Finance on forms provided for such purpose. The statement shall show all expenses incurred which are chargeable to the City.
- 2. Documentation. Written receipts shall be required to show expenses incurred for air travel, lodging and rental vehicles. Written receipts shall not otherwise be required.
- 3. Statements of expenses for conferences, which include all expenses incurred, shall be submitted to the Secretary to the City Council no later than 21 days after return from a conference or meeting, so that they can be forwarded to the Director of Finance no later than 30 days after return. Statements of expenses incurred for local meetings or activities should be submitted within 30 days of the time such expense was incurred; provided, however, that statements of expense for local mileage should be submitted monthly. Statements submitted after the dates specified shall be received and claims based thereon be paid if in order.
- 4. Review of Statements of Expense. The Mayor shall review and approve statements of expense for all Vice-Mayor and other Councilmembers, and the Vice-Mayor shall review and approve statements of expense of the Mayor for compliance with these guidelines, provided, however, that neither the Mayor nor the Vice-Mayor shall be responsible for reviewing statements for arithmetical correctness.

H. Miscellaneous Expenses. Expenses not specifically covered hereunder shall be paid by the City when such expenses are incurred in the performance of City business. In determining whether such expenses were necessarily incurred in the

performance of City business, the Internal Revenue Act of 1954 and the regulations of allowable deductions for business expenses may be considered as authority. The preceding sentence shall not be interpreted to require the substantiation or documentation required pursuant to said Act or regulations, as the subject of documentation is treated elsewhere in these guidelines.

- IV. **Staff Assistance.** It is recognized by the Council that work on the Council cannot be fully conducted at Council meetings. It is also recognized that the City Charter places the responsibility on the City Manager to conduct the day-to-day affairs of the City consistent with established Council policy and does not permit Councilmembers to direct the activities of City staff. The following policy regarding staff assistance is established to comply with the City Charter and meet the staffing needs of Councilmembers:

- A. **Intergovernmental assignments.** Reasonable staff assistance shall be provided to Councilmembers serving on intergovernmental bodies when the Council has approved the appointments of a member to that body, or in the case when the Council is not the approving body, if the Council has consented to that member sitting on that body. For purposes of this policy, intergovernmental bodies are broadly defined to include committees of intergovernmental agencies or organizations. Use of staff shall be consistent with the following guidelines:
1. Assignments will be made by the City Manager.
 2. If the intergovernmental body has its own professional staff, such staff should be utilized to the greatest practical extent, rather than City staff.
 3. Assigned City staff shall not attend the intergovernmental meeting unless the Councilmember requests such attendance from the City Manager, and the Manager approves.
 4. The primary responsibility of assigned staff is to review issues before the intergovernmental body as they may affect the City and advise and assist the Councilmember in presenting issues before the full Council.
 5. Councilmembers shall not direct staff to conduct major research. Major research shall occur only upon the direction of the City Council or City Manager.
- B. **Citizen's Complaints.** Complaints dealing with the administrative affairs of the City should be directed by the Councilmember to the

City Manager for appropriate information and follow-up, except as provided in Section D below.

- C. Speech and Correspondence Preparation. Councilmembers are entitled to staff assistance for speech and correspondence preparation. Such assistance shall be requested of the City Manager for purposes of assigning appropriate staff assistance. An outline of issues to be covered as well as available supporting material is to be provided by the requesting Councilmember.
- D. General. The direct provision of routine, easily retrievable information to a requesting Councilmember by a staff member regarding an issue pending before the Council or which member intends to bring to the Council is permitted in compliance with the City Charter as long as such request for information does not require such staff person to discuss or express an opinion regarding the issue.
- V. Implementation. The City Manager shall monitor those provisions of this policy within the City Manager's Charter responsibilities. Disagreement in interpretation shall be resolved by the City Council. The City Manager shall institute administrative policy to implement this policy, which shall be attached to this policy by reference. At the time a new Councilmember is seated, the Mayor and City Manager should review this policy with him/her.

Annually, the City Manager shall review the resource requirements necessary to support the level of service specified in this policy, and recommend as a part of the proposed budget necessary changes of budget resources.

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85-411

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Deputy City Clerk Certification _____